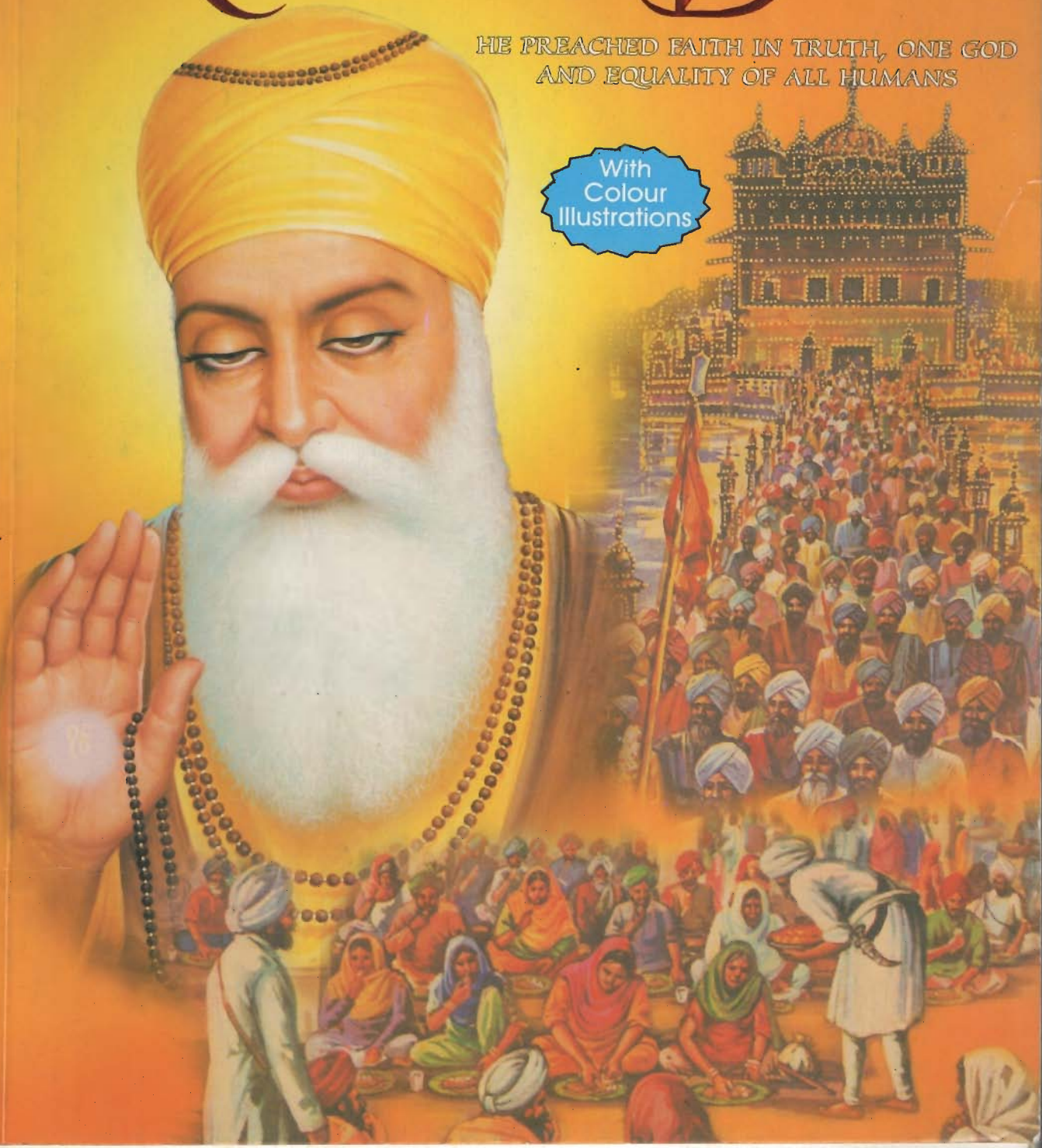


Guru Nanak Dev

HE PREACHED FAITH IN TRUTH, ONE GOD
AND EQUALITY OF ALL HUMANS

With
Colour
Illustrations



Guru Nanak Dev



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THE BIRTH OF GURU NANAK



Guru Nanak was born on 15th April, 1469 to Mehta Kalurai Bedi of Talwandi Town. Mehta Kalurai Bedi was employed with Talwandi ruler, Rai Bular as his Chief Patwari. He was a close confidant of the ruler. For this reason Mehta Kalurai did not suffer for any want. His was a well to do family.

It was the period of Moghul king, Babar. During his reign Muslim rulers used to torment Hindu subjects. Hindus were suffering the atrocities. For them there was darkness all around and their religion was being desecrated and forcible conversions to Islam were very common.

Guru Nank took birth from Mother Tripta's womb to deliver the tormented masses. The place where he was born is today known as Nankana Sahib. On his birth Pandit Gopaldas predicted, "This child is incarnation of God, descended to redeem the world".



BRINGING UP NANAK

Baby Nanak began to be brought up with all love and care in the Bedi household. Mother Tripta had born a daughter before Nanak. Her name was Nanaki. The baby brother was given the male version of her name. She mostly had lived at her maternal grand parents' home (*Nanihal*). That fact resulted in her being called Nanaki. She loved her baby brother Nanak and took great care of him. In playing, the younger brother kept company of his elder sister. Other kids used to come to play with them and witness the love between the sister and brother.

Baby Nanak's favourite chant was 'Sat Kartar'. It literally meant God is the only truth.





THE EDUCATION



When Nanak was five years old, his father sent him to Pandit Gopaldas Pandhe for formal learning. Pandit Gopaldas was delighted to find Nanak to be a genius kid. He started teaching with great expectations.

One day, Gopaldas asked Nanak to pronounce 'Om' the mono-syllabel for God. Nanak not only pronounced it but asked his teacher what it stood for.

The question greatly surprised the Pandit. 'What aroused the curiosity in so small a kid to know its meaning?' he wondered.

Pandit explained, "Nanak! 'Om' is God's mono-syllabel name."

Nanak remarked "Panditji, My mother tells me that Creator's name is 'Sat Kartar.' She says that Sat Kartar is our creator and the true God."

Pandit revealed, "Nanak! God has numerous names. 'Sat Kartar' and 'Om' are two of them."

Impressed by the kid's intelligence Pandit said to the Chief Patwari, "Mehtaji! Your son is born genius and scholar. I have nothing more to impart to him."

Then, Mehta Kalurai sent his son Nanak to learn Persian from a Maulvi, the Muslim cleric teacher.

Maulvi started with Persian alphabet.

The teacher asked Nanak to pronounce the first letter 'Alif.' Nanak asked what that first letter signified? The question baffled the Maulvi. He looked around sheepishly.

The kid, Nanak revealed to his teacher the significance of the first letter. "Maulvi sir! 'Alif' is One Allah. In Persian script 'Alif' stands for Allah that is God or Sat kartar."

On the same day, Maulvi went to Mehta Kalurai to say, "Mehta ! Your son is a chosen one of Allah. He can teach the world. What can I ?"



THREAD CEREMONY OPPOSED



Thus, the child Nanak was becoming famous for his inborn wisdom. His enlightened thoughts were taking every one by great surprise.

Many people had started believing that some incarnation had taken birth in Mehta Kalurai's home.

During that period, Hindu's were particular about thread ceremony (*Janeoo*) for children. And Nanak was to go through the same ritual.

Mehta Kalurai made arrangements for the ceremony and invited the relatives. But Nanak refused to accept the thread. He said that a cotton thread couldn't make one a a better person. What is needed to make a better person was character based on compassion, contentment, truth and the faith.

The child Nanak's thoughts of wisdom won everyone's heart.





RITUALISM CONDEMNED



Nanak hated meaningless rituals. He knew that all the rites and rituals imposed by Brahmins on the society were to serve their own ends. A Hindu was trapped in life long series of rites and rituals just designed for the priests to fleece him. A poor man would ruin his life meeting the demands of Brahmins. Only rich managed to survive their greed. Brahmins used the religion to blackmail the simple folk. They never took pity on the poor.

Nanak's heart bled for the helpless poor. He made a resolve to rescue the downtrodden from the trap of customs and fraudulent rites. He preached that God was one Sat Kartar. Brahmin created rites and customs were merely hoaxes. For God all the people were his children and one's woes were the results of his own misdeeds. Brahmins got antagonized. Commonfolk followed Nanak's path.



PLAYMATE MARDANA

A Muslim boy Mardana was Nanak's childhood playmate. Mardana would blindly put his faith in Nanak and always stood by him through thick and thin. He was very fond of playing on *rubab*. He used to sing Nanak's sermons to the accompaniment of his *rubab* music. Later, as Bhai Mardana he stuck to Nanak all his life. Wherever Nanak went, Bhai Mardana followed him.

From the very childhood Nanak liked solitude. Considering his pessimism, the father put him to the job of grazing cattle. Nanak would go to the pasture with the herd accompanied by playmate Mardana. As cattle grazed, the two would sit under a shady tree. Nanak would sing hymns in praise of God and Mardana would play on his *rubab* in tune. Thus, through music the two would get attuned to God.





HOOD UMBRELLA OVER NANAK



One day Nanak fell asleep under a tree while meditating on 'Sat Kartar'. Soon, he was in deep sleep mode. Mardana quietly herded the cattle away from that spot. He didn't want cattle noises to disturb Nanak's sleep.

After a while the shade of the tree shifted leaving Nanak's face exposed to harsh sunlight. Suddenly, a white serpent appeared there. It raised its huge hood and positioned it in such a way that Nanak's face now had hood-umbrella cover.

The ruler of the town, Rai Bular happened to pass by with his valet. They stopped to stare at the scene wonder struck. Bular said to his valet, "Look, that boy is no ordinary one. It is some one destined to become an emperor or a great saint."

"Rightly said, master," the valet agreed.

"Find out whose kid it is?" Rai Bular ordered his valet and spurred his horse to gallop away.





RAI BULAR'S WISH



Rai Bular returned to his palace and the court to narrate what he had seen to others. Whoever heard it was utterly amazed.

Then, the valet arrived to report, "Master! That boy woke up as soon as you left that place. The snake disappeared into the nearby bushes. I asked about the boy and learnt that the boy was the son of our own Chief Patwari, Mahta Kalurai Bedi. The boy's name is Nanak. And the miracle kid is devotee of 'Sat Kartar'."

"Lord! Such boy should be summoned and spoken to," a courtier suggested.

"You are right," Rai Bular said and added, "I will be pleased to meet such miracle kid. Will call him on right occasion."

The occasion was to come soon.





BIRDS OF RAMA—FIELDS OF RAMA



One other day, Nanak and his mate Mardana took the herd of cattle to the pasture. The cattle were let loose. As usual, the two sat under a tree. There were fields nearby. The crops stood promising a rich harvest. The cattle strayed and began feasting on the crops.

Young Nanak saw that thousands of birds were also pecking at the crops. The farmers had gone away seeing Nanak and Mardana there naturally presuming that the boys would take care.

Twittering birds put Nanak in spiritual mood. He chirped;
“Aha! Rama’s birds and Rama’s harvest,
feed, feed ye birds, it is a feed fest.”

Shortly later, the farmers returned to find their crops being plundered. In fury they started to beat the cattle with sticks. Nanak cried out, “Mardana, Stop them! Beating poor animals so cruelly is inhuman act and it is not right.”





COMPLAINT AGAINST NANAK



For the destruction of crops the farmers were furious at Nanak and Mardana. The two were rebuked soundly. Not satisfied with that the farmers went to Rai Bular to lodge a complaint against Patwari's son, Nanak.

"Lord! Nanak ruined our crops by letting loose his cattle into our fields. And he allowed the birds to feed on our crops."

Rai Bular summoned Mehta Kalurai Bedi to his court and said, "Mehta! Your son has caused great damage to the crops of these farmers. You must pay them compensation."

Just then, Nanak arrived there with his mate Mardana. Nanak spoke, "Lord! Ask these farmers to harvest their crops. If they find the yield less than what they had expected, we shall compensate the short fall."

Rai Bular sent away the farmers pacified.





THE FARMERS APOLOGIZE



After departing from the court the farmers harvested the crops. They were pleasantly surprised to discover that the yield was in fact, double of what they had estimated. The farmers felt ashamed of their behaviour to Nanak. All of them trooped to Kalurai Bedi's house repenting and fell at the feet of young Nanak.

"We wronged you, son. Please forgive us," they apologized.

"Who am I to forgive you?" Nanak asked and advised, "Seek the forgiveness of 'Sat Kartar, the redeemer of all.'"

"We have come to your fold," the farmers prayed. "Now on we shall follow your advice." They became Nanak's disciples and began to convert others too to his teachings.





THE TRUE BARGAIN



From that day on Mehta Kalurai Bedi stopped sending Nanak to graze the cattle. Nanak stayed home. But nothing interested him. He would just sit alone and brood. It worried the father.

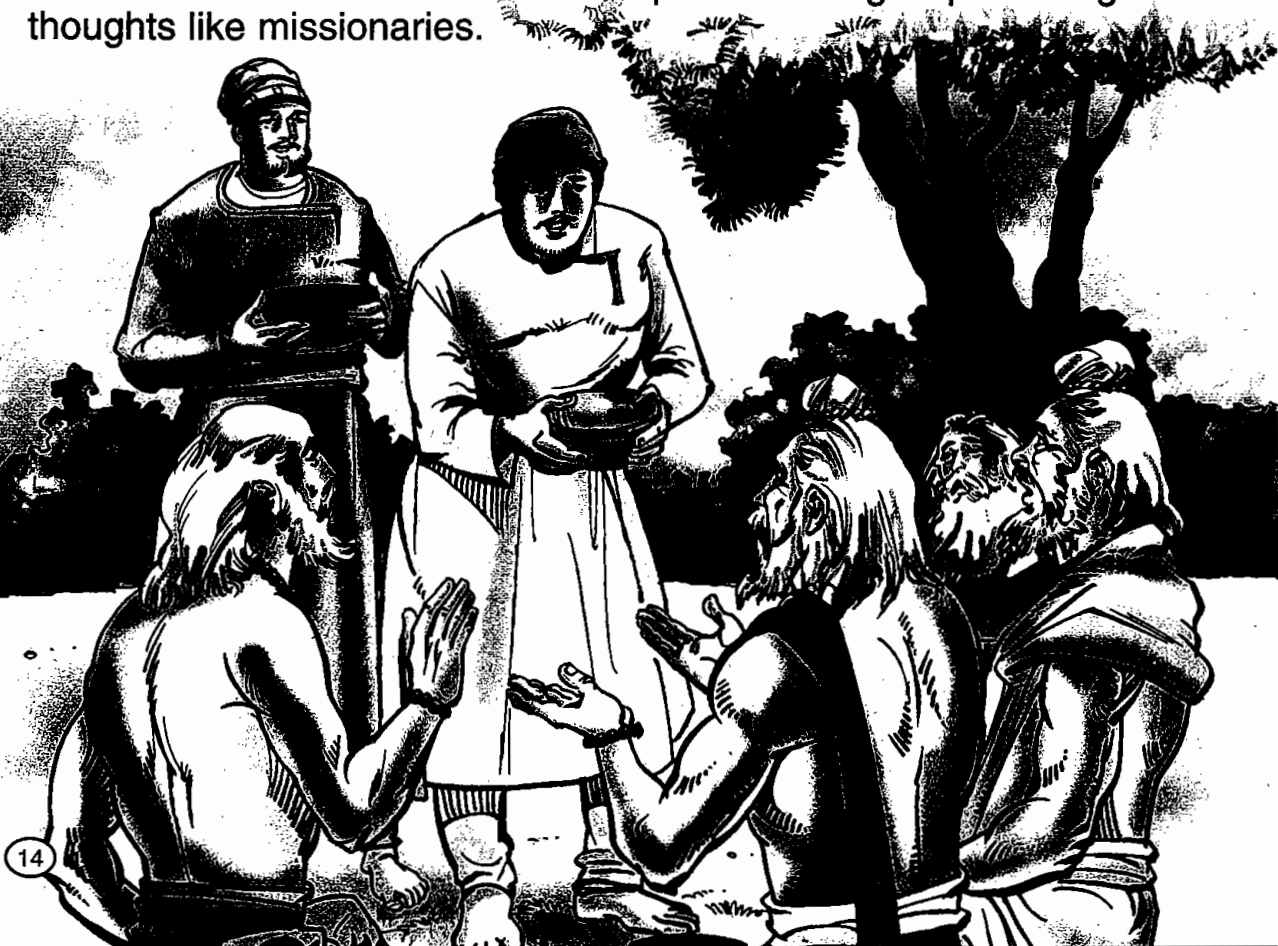
One day he said to Nanak, "Son, How long will you go on like this? Better if you do some business. Some clean and honest business, Dishonesty does not pay."

Nanak nodded his full agreement. Mehta Kalurai gave him twenty rupees as business capital. Nanak set out with Mardana and Bala, another of his childhood mates.

On the way, they met some hungry *sadhus*. Nanak sent for some food with the twenty rupees he had and feasted the *sadhus*. He advised them. "Doing penance on hungry stomach is senseless and useless."

"You are right," the *sadhus* agreed. "The satisfaction one gets from feeding the hungry ones is the real gain. It is great."

The *sadhus* became Nanak disciples and began preaching his thoughts like missionaries.



FATHER ADMONISHED

Nanak returned home empty handed and when his father learnt about the feeding of the *sadhus* he got angry. He chided Nanak in harsh words. When Rai Bular come to know of it he called Kalurai and admonished him, "Mehta! Take your twenty repees. Now on Nanak is my son. Do not bad-mouth him. Just let him do what he likes. I will pay if it costs money."

Mehta listened quietly with his head down in shame. With tears in his eyes Rai Bular spoke, "Mehta! Your son is no ordinary mortal. He is God's chosen one, an incarnation."

"Forgive me, Lord," Mehta said and added, "I will say nothing to Nanak anymore. I will leave him alone."

Mehta Kalurai returned home and stopped interfering with his son, Nanak.





GEETA RECITAL BY NANAK



Nanak revealed his enlightened mind on several occasions. Once he was reading Geeta. Mehta Kalurjai and Pandit Gopaldas happened to pass by.

Gopaldas asked, "What are you reading, Nanak?"

"I am reading Geeta, Panditji."

"Can you recite it to me?" Pandit queried.

"I can and I can tell you its gist also," Nanak replied.

Then, Nanak recited entire Geeta without looking at the book and revealed the essence, "Panditji, the knowledge of Geeta helps one rise above ignorance of the material world. Its subject matter is related to God and a living being. It explains time and deeds. It reveals that the Immortal One is the supreme. It controls the life and the nature. What matters about a living being is the deeds he does. He is the supreme knowledge, and the Ultimate Truth."

Pandit and Kalurjai Bedi stared at Nanak.





NANAK WORKS IN STORE



Mehta Kalurai was a worried man. He feared of his son becoming an ascetic. So, he sent Nanak to live with his elder sister Nanaki at Sultanpur, a town situated on the bank of Veyi river near Kapurthala. Its ruler was a Muslim, Lodi Nawab. Nanaki's husband, Jairam was employed with the Nawab.

Jairam was a gentle and honest person. Nawab liked him.

Mehta Kalurai had hoped that at his sister's Nanak would become an worldly young man, weaned away from spiritualism. Nanaki happily included Nanak in her household. Her husband got Nanak employed with Nawab as his storekeeper.

Nanak was growing into Nanak Dev. The childhood was becoming a past. He would rise early, take bath, say prayers and go to the royal godown to work till late night. Seeing him seriously at work pleased Jairam and Nanaki.





THE HONESTY OF NANAK



Nanak took no care to keep proper inventory of the goods of the store. Whoever went to his door to demand anything, got it without any hesitation or discrimination. He would say 'No Hindu or no Turk. All are the children of the Immortal One. The differences are the creation of the human greed.'

His sublime thoughts endeared him to the people. He earned fame for it. As a result mobs of hungry, poor, needy and beggars began to throng the store. And Nanak would disappoint no one. He just dished out anything one asked for.

When Nawab's other employees saw it they started whispering campaigns as to how Nanak was hellbent upon emptying Nawab's store. Some thought that poor Jairam would pay the price. They wanted Nawab to be informed about it.





BACK-BITERS LOSE FACE



The jealous employees poisoned the ears of Nawab against Nanak. Nawab called Jairam and asked him to go to the godown and check the inventory of the stocks along with other employees who had complained. Jairam went to the godown with others as directed by his employer. They checked the inventory and tallied the goods. Nothing was found missing. Infact, the store was full of essential goods. The record was up to date and impeccable.

The back-biting employees turned pale. They were trembling with fear. Nawab could punish them for making false complaints.

Jairam went to Nawab with other employees and revealed what was found. It angered Nawab. He rebuked the employees who had back-bited against Nanak.

They were warned not to make fake complaints in future or be severely punished.





THE CLERIC BIGOTS CONSPIRE



The rebuke and warning of Nawab made the communal employees angry. They carried grudge against Nanak. To retaliate they started insitigating bigotic Muslim clerics to act against Kafir Nanak. They conspired. But Nanak just ignored their acts of jealousy and animosity. He kept up his acts of charity as before. He helped the needy and any others who sought his help. He won't turn back any seeker empty handed.

Nanak was now a young man. He displayed no teenage frivolity. He continued to serve the poor and helpless, meditated on Immortal One and stayed straight. Nanak considered no one as his enemy. He would meet even those who worked against him with love.



NANAK MARRIES

One day, Nanaki said to her husband Jairam, "Listen, if we ask father to get Nanak married he might give up wasting his time in chanting 'Sat Kartar' all day long. The wife would make him a family man."

"May be, you are right," the husband agreed but suggested, "But first ask Nanak if he would agree to it at all."

"Right, I will talk to him," Nanaki announced.

At night, when Nanak came home his sister talked to him about marriage. He refused firmly to get married.

But the family kept up pressure. At last, Nanak yielded and he was married to a girl named Sulakkhani, the daughter of Mool Chand Khatri of Batala on the 24th of the *Jyeshtha* month of the summer of 1487 AD.

Nanak didn't allow any ritualistic rites or pomp and show in his marriage. He banished all the orthodox customs.



ALL YOUR'S O' CREATOR

He simply went around the fire with his bride and took the oath of marriage in the name of Immortal One. He stayed at Saltanpur and carried on his storekeeping job.

In the godown he would count out the weights or the numbers of items as one, two three... and at thirteen he would stop. He wouldn't count further. The other person was free to take as much or as many of the required items above that. The people used to joke about it behind his back that Nanak did not know how to count beyond 13. The fools didn't realise that it signified the spiritual philosophy of Nanak.

'13' in vernacular language is pronounced as 'Tera' which also means 'Yours' literally. For Nanak 'Tera' meant 'Yours'. 'All yours O' God whatever here' invocation counted out the rest. No one complained ever of any short-counting or short-weighing. For him it was God's work.



CHILDHOOD MATES

His childhood mates Brother Bala and Brother Mardana remained with him throughout his life. After the godown duty, Nanak would sit with them as a group member. Nanak would sing hymns, his own creations, Brother Mardana would play on his *rubab* and Brother Bala played tomtom. Thus, the three created spiritual music magic which enthralled everyone.

Gradually Nanak Dev was becoming famous as a spiritual guide of refreshingly new breed. The people flocked to the godown and musical devotional session would start impromptu.

Some of the employees of Nawab still were busy in finding faults with Nanak. They wanted to get rid of Nanak in some way. But fear of Nawab's anger held them in check. Nanak knew the moves of his enemies. Meanwhile, now Nanak too wanted to leave the job without any bad feeling.



NANAK AND MARDANA AT VEYI RIVER

It was religious custom of Nanak to rise before dawn to go to Veyi river to take bath accompanied by Mardana. After the bath they would sit under a tree and both meditated.

One day, Nanak and Mardana descended into the water to take a dip. Mardana soon emerged out of water to wash clothes on the bank. Nanak swam to midstream and looked at Mardana. Mardana shouted a caution about the depth of water there.

Nanak dived down. Mardana stared at the centre of the widening waves created by Nanak's dive. He was scared but hoped for Nanak to show up. He failed to surface. It worried Brother Mardana. He dived into the water to look for Nanak. He couldn't find. Mardana started to cry in despair.





WATERY GRAVE FOR NANAK



Mardana thought that Nanak had drowned. He returned wailing bitterly and told Jairam what had happened. The family started to grieve. The news spread in the town like wild fire.

Crowds of people rushed to Jairam's house. Hundreds of them rushed to the river. No one wanted to believe that Nanak was dead by drowning. On the river bank and outside Jairam's house people were crying in grief.

Swimmers searched the river. There was no trace of Nanak's body. They returned to Jairam's house grieving inconsolably. Some of them tried to console Sulakkhani, Jairam and Nanaki who was screaming that her brother was a divine soul who could not die like that and that he would return.

run





HE SAW IMMORTAL ONE



Two days went by in mourning for Nanak, Mardana used to go to river bank in the mornings and weep in memory of the departed friend. On the third morning a pleasant surprise waited for him. He found Nanak in meditation under the usual tree. His face was aglow and a halo framed his head.

Overjoyed Mardana shed tears copiously. He ran to Nanak and fell at his feet. He wept. Nanak patronizingly put his palm on Mardana's head and said. "Why do you weep dear? I have gone to truth dimension to meet Immortal One. I saw him. He is just glorious. Only a true devotee can see Him."

Mardana rose up and ran to the town. He told everyone screaming, "Nanak is alive. He is alive. He has come back after seeing Immortal One."

Whoever heard it ran towards the river bank.





THE FAMILY UNITES



Nanaki and Jairam also ran towards the river. They left Sulakkhani behind although she also wanted to accompany them. On the way, Nanaki said, "Look, didn't I tell you my brother was a divine one? He has descended on earth to redeem the mankind. No one can kill him. He can't die before his time."

On the river bank, Nanaki took her brother in her arms and cried, "Brother! Where have you been? Didn't you think about how it would shock us all?"

Nanak smiled and spoke, "Sister! I had gone to meet Immortal One who lives in the truth dimension in the form a divine light. I can't describe the glory of that dimension. It just redeems everything. I am also redeemed sister."

Nanak's face was lumiscent.

"Let's go home," Nanaki urged. "Tell me the rest there." Nanak and Nanaki started for home in a procession. The people showered flowers at them.



PLUNDER OF GODOWN

In the town, instead of going home Nanak went to the godown and opened its doors for the people saying, "Brothers and sisters! I am handing over this godown to you. Take whatever you like."

The crowd flooded the godown. No guard could stop them. The people took away whatever anyone could lay hands on. The godown got emptied in no time. Nanak didn't go home. He sent away Nanaki and Jairam. He himself went to the town cremation ground and sat there in meditation.

The plunder of the godown sent the employees on the run to Nawab and they gave him the news of the free loot. It infuriated Nawab. He summoned Jairam and sent him to investigate the godown matter. Jairam knew that the godown had been plundered. He had witnessed it. To satisfy his employer he had to go to the godown with other employees. To their utter surprise they found the godown overflowing with stocks.





PUZZLED NAWAB



The frightened employees ran to Nawab to report that the godown and the stocks were intact. The account book showed seven hundred rupees due to Nanak from the state. It immensely puzzled the ruler. He screamed angrily, "You good for nothing thieves! You tell lies and try to defame an honest man like Nanak. Have you people no shame left in you? Go and bring Nanak to me with due respect or I will put you all to death."

The employees were baffled. They had seen the godown being plundered with their own eyes. Was Nanak sorcerer? They wondered. They went to Nanak and persuaded him to present himself to Nawab. Nawab paid Nanak 700 rupees due to him and said, "Nanak! These back-biters won't anymore create trouble for you. You must keep the charge of the godown."





NANAK DELINKS FROM GODOWN



Nanak returned to take charge of the godown. But very soon he lost interest in it. It felt a burden to him now. So, one day he went to the court and pleaded, "Lord Nawab! I can't any more run the godown. Please appoint a new storekeeper."

"Why? What's the problem now?" Nawab asked.

"Nawab, I am not born to keep charge of a godown of a person who can not spare even a fistful of grains to a hungry man. God has sent me on the earth for some other cause. I will serve that cause now."

"For what cause God sent your to earth?"

Nanak replied, "Nawab Janab, Immortal One sent me to earth to tell people that all the humans are His children. There is no difference. None is big or small. There is no Hindu, no Muslim and no untouchable. We must all chant the name of one common God and live in peace and love."





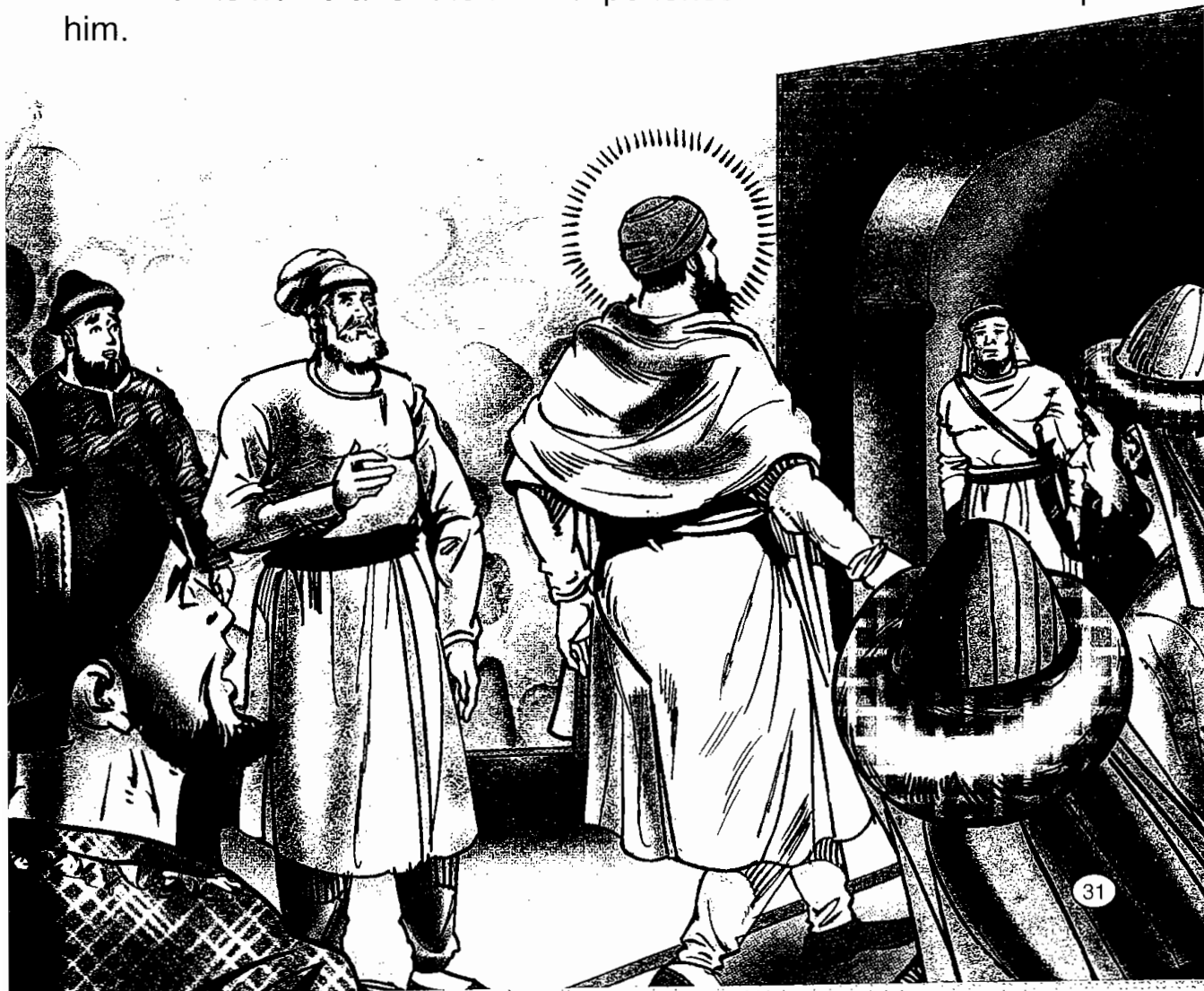
KNOW THY GOD



Nawab looked at Nanak surprised and asked, "When did you meet God? When and where did he tell you that? Is your God different from my Allah?"

Nanak calmly revealed "Nawab sir! The day I put myself in meditation under water the angels took me into the dimension of truth. There I saw God. Then he blessed me with the enlightenment that God was one. Allah, Khuda, God, Bhagwan, Parmatma, Ram, Rahim etc are just his different Aliases. No difference. Instead of in your godown I will work in His godown. In His godown there is no discrimination. All are equal."

Nanak departed from the court for the cremation ground that had become his home after the river experience. Nawab dared not stop him.



MAD NANAK

Nanak went straight to the cremation ground and sat in meditation. He was totally immersed in 'Sat Kartar'. His condition was weird. The people talked a lot of mad things about him. Some said that he is controlling ghosts with sorcery power. Others said Nanak was just Sat Kartar mad.

On the other hand, Nanak had already earned a name as a holy man, a new breed of sage or messiah. So, the people nevertheless came to pay obeisance. Nanak talked to no one. Bala and Mardana took care of him.

Whoever visited Nanak took back strange stories and rumours, some true and some imaginary. But Nanak's miracleman image didn't suffer for that reason.

Nanaki and Sulakkhani tried to take him home several times but failed. He would stare into the empty space like a mad person.





QUAZI AND NANAK



Nanak's state worried Jairam and Nanaki. Sulakkhani cursed her luck. After the godown incident Nawab had grown faith in Nanak. He didn't want a decent person like Nanak to stay in cremation ground weirdly. After lot of thought he called city Quazi to his court and said, "Quazi, I know that Nanak has a lot of respect for you. But these days he stays in cremation ground. The people are talking a lot of crazy things about him. I wish you to persuade him to come back to the civilized world."

Quazi went to the cremation ground. Nanak's condition shocked him. He said, "Nanak! Why don't your go home?"

Nanak replied, "Quazi sir! The people think that I am crazy, raving mad. Nanak is mad for his God. I don't know anyone except Immortal One. He is my origin and my end. Rest everything is meaningless. I don't want to waste myself into meaninglessness. There is no Hindu or Muslim. All are God's children."





NANAK IN MOSQUE



Nanak's talk made Quazi frown. He said, "How can Hindus and Muslims be alike? If you know no difference between the two, can you come with me to offer *Namaz* in a mosque?"

Nanak at once got up and spoke to Quazi, "So, Mister Quazi, let's go. I will offer *Namaz* in the mosque."

The news spread in the town. The people converged on the mosque. Rumours flew fast. Some said that Nanak had become a Muslim and Quazi had tricked him into it. When Nawab learnt about it he also set out for the mosque with his soldiers fearing Hindu-Muslim clash. Hindus were agitated. Nanak and Jairam were worried.

As prayer time arrived Nanak lined up with other *Namazis*. When other Muslims bent in obeisance, Nanak also bent. Then, he raised his head and sat down cross-legged.

The others continued the ritual.





YOUR OWN PRIVATE BUSINESS



After *Namaz* other Muslim devotees and Quazi noticed that Nanak was sitting on the floor with his eyes shut. It angered everyone. Nawab screamed at him, "Nanak! By not respecting the *Namaz* norms you have insulted Islam. It is blasphemy. You shall be punished for that."

Nanak spoke in calm voice, "Nawab! Don't lose your cool. I couldn't offer prayers all alone. Here every one was thinking of his own business while going through *Namaz* motions."

"What do you mean?" Quazi angrily thundered.

"I am telling the truth, Quazi sir," Nanak revealed and added, "Weren't you thinking of the welfare of your mare and her foal?" Nanak turned to Nawab, "And sir, weren't you mentally buying Arabian horses in Kabul instead of reading *Namaz*?"

Quazi and Nawab looked sheepish as others laughed.



NANAK IS FAMOUS

When Quazi and Nawab regained their poise they apologized and fell at Nanak's feet. "Nanak Dev, you indeed are divine. I was buying Arabian horses during my *Namaz*," Nawab admitted.

Quazi said, "What you told about me was also true. During *Namaz*, I indeed was thinking of my own business. We were cheating. You must be a prophet to know that."

All the Muslims in *Namaz* congregation hailed Nanak Dev. News spread all over the town. A crowd of Muslims carried Nanak out of the mosque respectfully on their shoulders. Soon, it became a procession joined by hundreds of Hindus who showered flowers at Nanak.

Nanak was in great glory.



SON BORN TO NANAK

Nanak now realised that cremation ground was small world and he should live amongst people for the benefit of the society. He returned to the family life. He started preaching in the evenings and mornings. Brother Mardana would sing Nanak's verses of wisdom to the accompaniment of his *rubab* music to the people.

To redeem the societies with his spiritual wisdom Nanak decided to travel and traverse the lands spreading new light. His heart bled at the sufferings of the poor brought upon them by fraudulent priests and clerics.

On the 9th day of *Bhadon* Month of the rainy season of the year 1494 AD, Nanak's wife gave birth to a son, who was named 'Shrichand.' Later as Baba Shrichand he started 'Pessimist (*Udaseen*) Sect.' A couple of years hence Nanak Dev sired second son.





RENUNCIATION



Nanak stayed home and preached. He used to advise people to give up worldly desires and trappings. He felt that he was himself trapped in desires.

The proof was the second son born to him.

One day while meditating he realised that as long as he was himself bogged down in desires how could he preach detachment from material world to others?

He made up his mind to act upon what he was preaching to others. The people revered him as a guru and listened to his sermons with great devotion and sincerity. But he had a feeling that he himself needed a true guru to be able to chart out a new path. He decided to let Sat Kartar within him to guide him.

So, he said to Nanaki, "Sister, I must leave. I must go away to complete the mission 'Sat Kartar' has given me life for."

"Will you leave your wife and children?" Nanaki was shocked.

"Sister! Immortal One who gave them life will take care of them as well," Nanak said calmly.



NANAK ADVISES RELATIVES

Nanak's decision to leave family brought his father and his wife's parents to Sultanpur to make him change his mind. Nanak said, "Father, there are countless people who have lost their true way. They are trapped in useless customs, rites, evils and social exploitations. The darkness is drowning them. Immortal One who is 'Satguru,' the true teacher has asked me to show the light of the truth to redeem the lost ones. Wordly relationships are illusions. I no more recognize them."

The relatives knew that Nanak was no ordinary mortal. He won't listen to them and nothing could stop him. They allowed Nanak to go his chosen way.

Guru Nanak set out with his eternal mates, Brother Mardana and Brother Bala on his holy mission. They believed in God and were out to act on His commands. The primary command was to conquer 8 main enemies.





EIGHT ENEMIES OF NANAK



The first enemy of Nanak was 'Butcher', the symbol of violence. Nanak hated violence.

The second enemy was 'Ruler' who tormented the poor and financially bled them white and worked them to bones.

The third enemy was 'Priest' who in the form of Pandits and Mullahs trapped people in deep pit of meaningless customs, rites, rituals, blind faiths and ceremonies.

The fourth enemy was 'Brahmin', the symbol of religious bigotry, castism communalism and social evils.

The fifth enemy was phoney 'Holy man' who played hoaxes, tricked people and exploited the gullibility of simple people.

The sixth enemy of Nanak was 'Robber' who looted people of their hard earned money and property. Nanak considered thief to be also a kind of robber who stole away other's property.

The seventh enemy was 'Ritualist Pandit' who was ruining the masses by making simple and faithful people waste their earnings in a vicious cycle of religious rituals.

And the eighth enemy of Nanak was evil customs follower. It included all those simpletons who never used their heads and sheepishly accepted whatever the priests or Godmen told them. Those were the people responsible for the society being plagued by horrendous evil customs based on blind faiths.

Guru Nanak raised his voice against all those enemies and condemned them in this preachings. He warned people that such characters defined by him as enemies were anti-God who could only lead to hell. As a result the priests and clerics became his enemies because Nanak was hurting their business of looting masses and causing them great embarrassment.

They hired anti-social elements and wherever Guru Nanak went he was greeted with shoes, mud, tomatoes, rotten things and chappals. But Nanak stood firm.

The ugly objects hurled at him turned into flowers. The people would hail him and the slogan of 'Sat Shree Akal' would rant the air to blow away the enemies.

MILK OR BLOOD

Once, on his way, Guru Nanak reached 'Emnabad'. He stayed at the hut of a poor carpenter named Bhai Lalo who belonged to the lower caste. During those days, no upper caste accepted food from an untouchable. Guru Nanak would not care. In the same town a rich estate owner named Bhago also lived. During Guru's stay there Bhago organised a grand feast. A great many delicacies were cooked. But Nanak stayed away. Bhago got Nanak forcibly brought to him. He said, "Why don't you eat my delicious rich food instead of munching dry *rotis* of that untouchable Lalo?"

Nanak asked for rich man's rich food and dry *rotis* from Lalo household. He took the two kinds of foods in his separate fists and squeezed. The people saw in surprise that from the rich food blood was trickling down. Milk was dropping from the other fist.

It stunned the richman and he fell at Nanak's feet.





GURU NANAK'S PROPHECY



Guru Nanak picked up Bhago and said, "Rich man! Your rich food feast is the result of money you made by bleeding off the poor people. You forcibly realised taxes from rich and poor. That is why I didn't come to your feast to drink blood. On the other hand Lalo's *roti* is soaked in the milk of love, honesty, labour and true faith. You saw it. Now you know why I live with him."

Bhago said crying, "Master Guru, you have opened my eyes. Forgive me. I want to do penance for my sins. Please take me into your fold."

"Well rich man! You can atone for your sins only by donating your wealth to the poor. Live a life of honesty."

Bhago followed the advice of Guru Nanak. He distributed all his wealth among the poor and dedicated his life to serve poor.

One day, while meditating Nanak visioned the earth becoming red. He said to his host, "Brother Lalo. I see a Moghul named Babar coming from Kabul with a large army. Rivers of blood will flow. There will be great carnage. Go away from this town."





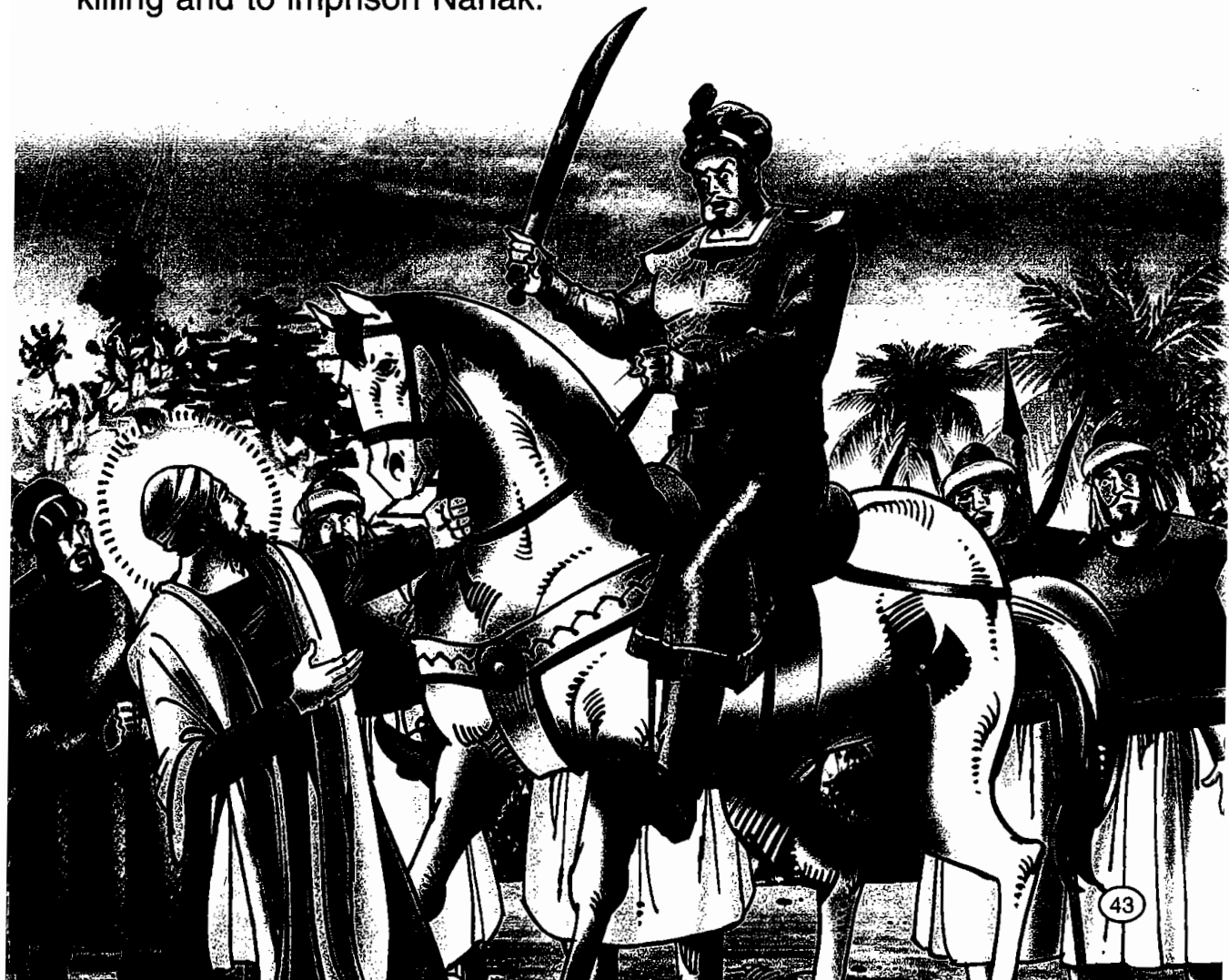
THE COURAGE OF GURU NANAK



Lalo left Emnabad as commanded by Nanak. Guru Nanak stayed back. A few days later Babar's army attacked Emnabad. Thousands of people got beheaded. The streets choked with dead bodies. Streams of blood flowed on the roads. The survivors were fleeing. Even the *sadhus* and the holy men fled from the town. But Guru Nanak stayed put regardless.

Guru Nanak could not tolerate the killings and the bloodshed. He rose up and went to get hold of the reign of Babar's horse. Babar had blood smeared sword in his hand. Nanak was not impressed. He spoke, "O Babar! Stop this bloodshed."

Babar looked at the glowing spiritual face of Nanak and winced. He sheathed his sword. Then, Babar ordered his soldiers to stop the killing and to imprison Nanak.





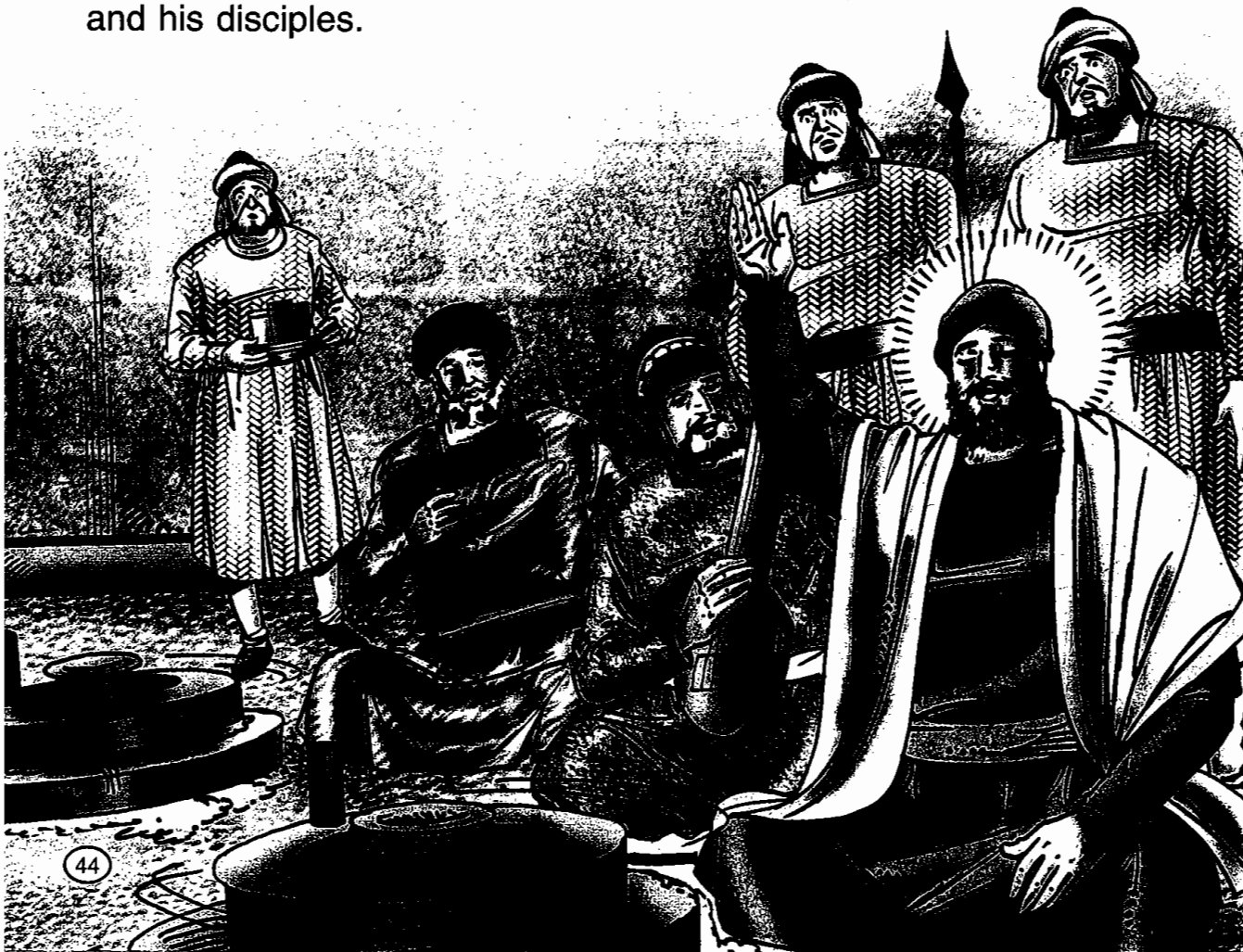
SPELL OF SATGURU NIRANKAR



The soldiers caught Nanak and Mardana. They were put in a prison. There were several other prisoners grinding on stone mills. Nanak was also given a mill to grind. Guru Nanak asked Brother Mardana to play on his *rubab*. Nanak sang his couplets and Mardana provided music. The other prisoners also sang spell-bound by the music. And lo ! A miracle happened. The mills began to revolve on their own. No hands working on them. The soldiers informed Babar about it.

Greatly surprised, Babar ran to the prison and watched. He had a bag of hashish with him. Babar offered hashish to Nanak. Guru said, "King! Wine, hashish and opium are temporary intoxicants. The real thing is to be intoxicated with 'Satguru Nirankar' which is eternal. Who needs the poor substitutes?"

It impressed Babar. He ordered his soldiers to release Guru Nanak and his disciples.





WATER TO THE DEAD



Once Guru Nanak went to Haridwar for a holy dip. He saw people pouring water to sun standing in knee deep water. He asked one, "Brother, what are you doing?"

The man replied, "I am offering water to my dead elders. I pour water for the sun and the dead ones will get it. It is so said."

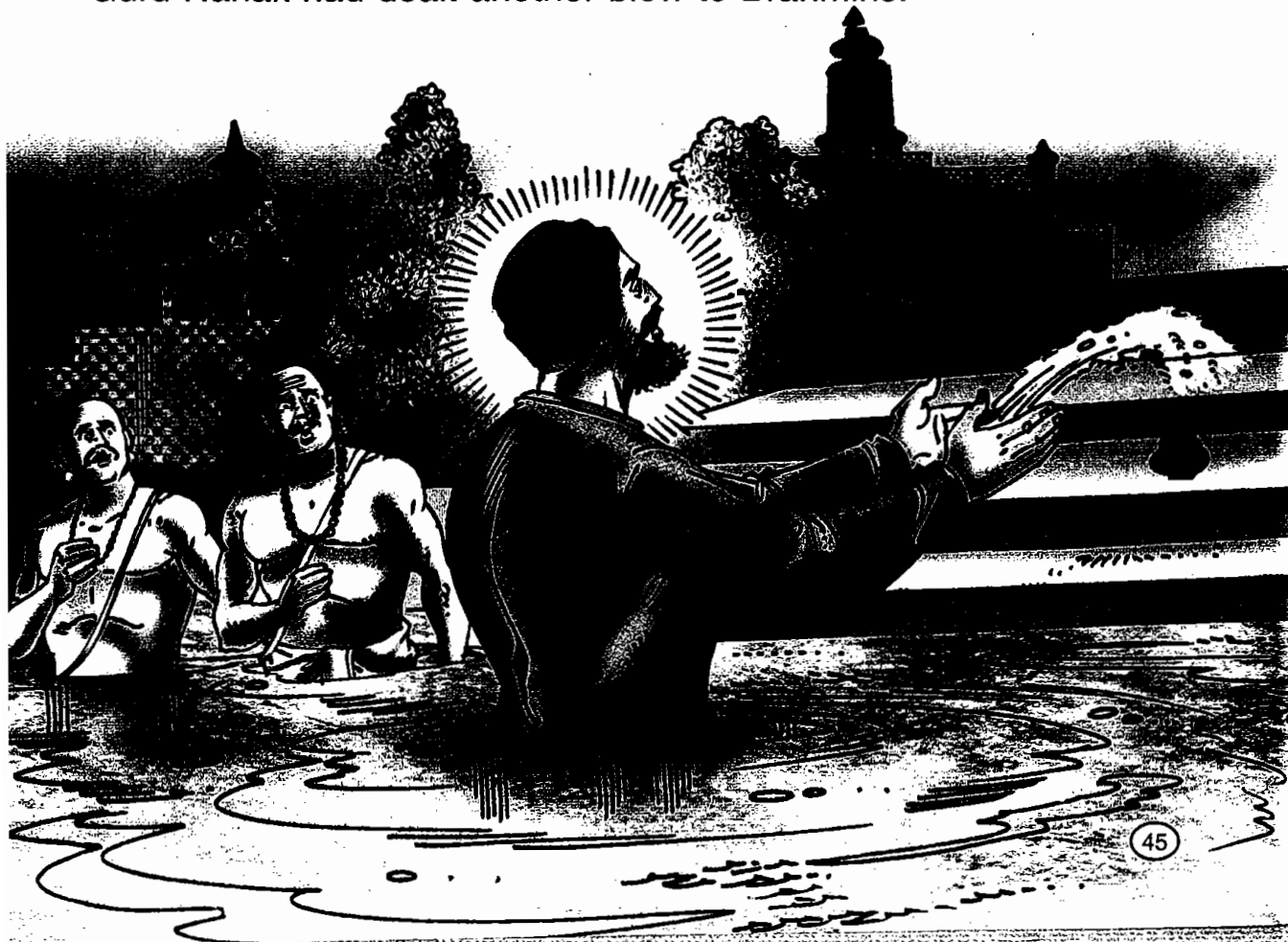
Guru Nanak descended into water and began pouring water facing westwards. That man remarked, "Brother, what is that? No one offers water facing the west."

Nanak explained, "Brother, I come from Punjab. I have fields there. Water is badly needed. So, I am irrigating my fields."

"Are you mad? How will water reach so far off fields of yours?"

"Why won't it?" Nanak reasoned, "If your water can reach to your dead ones in the heaven, why can't my water reach to the fields situated far nearer?"

Guru Nanak had dealt another blow to Brahmins.





WHICH SIDE QUABA



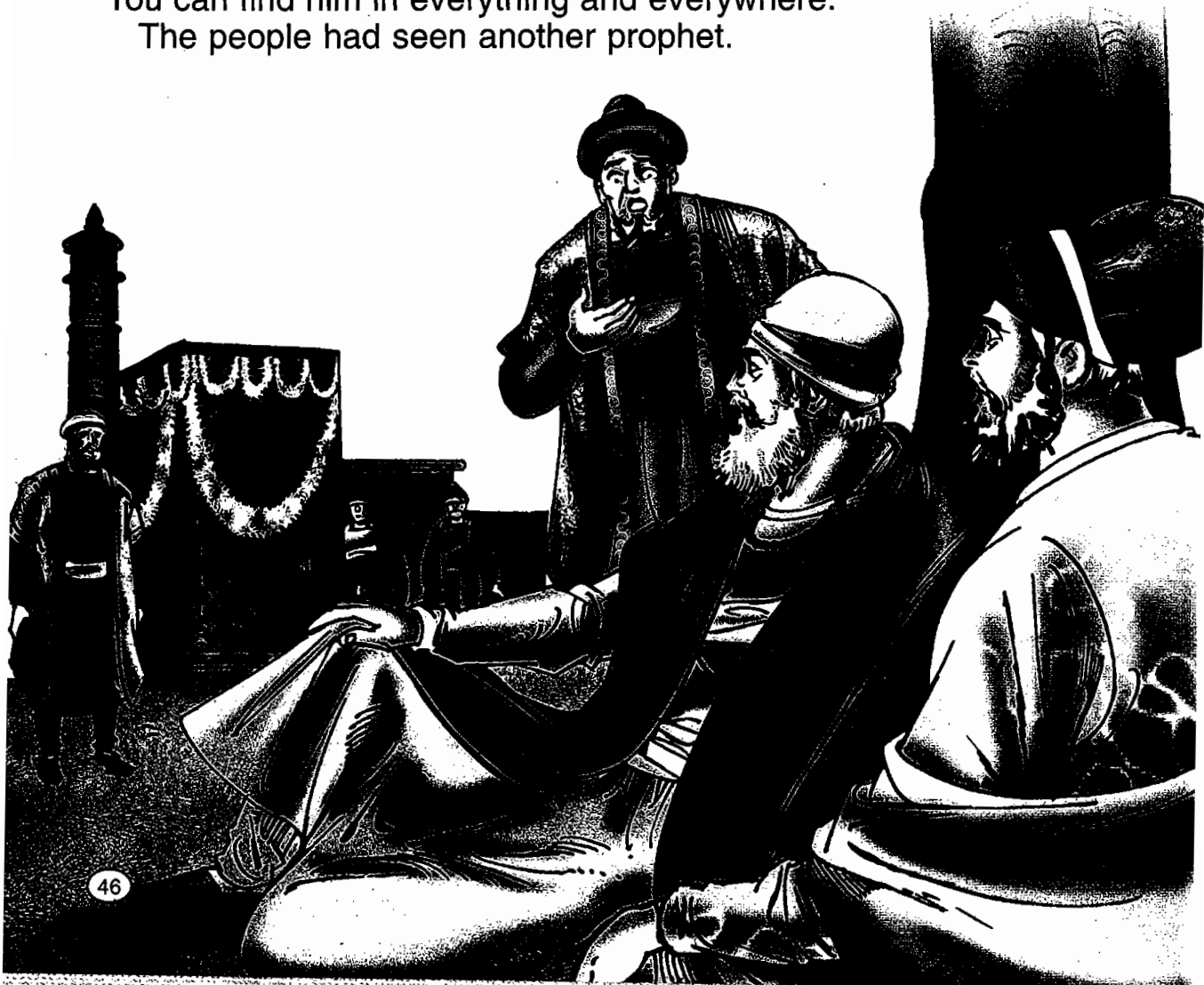
Travelling along, one day, Guru Nanak reached the most holy place of Muslims, Mecca. He sat down under a tree to rest with Bala and Mardana. Some Muslims objected as Nanak's feet were towards Quaba which was against Islamic norms.

Guru Nanak said, "Brothers ! I see Quaba in every direction. Please turn my feet into the direction Quaba doesn't exist."

The Muslims turned his feet to face the opposite direction. They were horrified to find Quaba on that side. Guru Nanak's feet were turned towards other directions but every time Quaba was there on that side. The Muslims were puzzled.

Guru Nanak explained, "Brothers! Allah is in every particle, every where, in every direction. It is no miracle but a fact. He is Omnipresent. You can find him in everything and everywhere."

The people had seen another prophet.





ENCOUNTER WITH KODEY DEMON



Guru Nanak and his companions travelled and preached in several lands. During the course of his travels the instances of several miracles happened. His fame had swept all around. Once he was passing through a jungle. Hungry Mardana went off in search of something to eat. A horrific demon siezed Mardana and put him in a boiling cauldron of oil to fry him for his eating. But Mardana invoked Guru and the boiling oil felt pleasantly cool.

Meanwhile, looking for his disciple Guru Nanak reached there. He said to the demon, "It is sin to eat another living being. Life is God's gift. Your must obey His wish."

The sermon of Guru Nanak deeply impressed the demon whose name was 'Kodey'. With folded hands he begged for mercy for his sins and took a vow not to kill again.



LEHNA INHERITS SEAT

Guru Nanak had established 'Guru Seat' at Kartarpur. It was here that he started '*Langer*'—food-for-all kitchen system. A man named Chaudury Lehna Singh used to live in Nagay's Inn near Ferozepur. He was a 'Mata' devotee. Once he came to Kartarpur to hear Nanak and never went back. He became the most devoted faithful of Guru. He could do anything to honour the command of Guru Nanak. He served Guru Nanak till his last moment.

In consideration of his spirit of sacrifice Guru Nanak declared him to be the 'Heir to the Guru Seat'. Nanak's wife had wished the seat for her elder son. But Guru Nanak didn't want it to be a dynastic property. He wanted it to go to the best deserving candidate.

Before relinquishing his mortal body Guru handed over the seat to Brother Lehna in the presence of his faithful bands.

In death, Guru Nanak's body had transformed into a heap of flowers which was consigned to the flames of the funeral pyre on 22nd December, 1539 AD.

